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Four From U.S. Killed in '61, Mansfield Says

Dirksen Statement On Bay of Pigs Gets New Details

By the Associated Press

Senate Democratic Leader Mansfield has acknowledged that during the heat of the 1961 Cuban invasion several Americans volunteered to fly combat missions and four lost their lives.

Thus Senate Republican Leader Dirksen got no argument from the administration's chief Senate spokesman on his charge yesterday that four Americans had been shot down in the Bay of Pigs disaster.

Senator Mansfield, who said he was speaking only for himself, added some details in his statement:

"It is known that a few experienced American airmen were employed to train Cuban pilots, navigators and radio operators. Because of exhaustion of Cuban pilots, several of these Americans volunteered to fly combat missions.

"Apparently a decision was made by those directing operations to accept this offer. Several planes were attacked and four of these Americans lost their lives."

Cuba Denies Shrimper Attack

Shortly before Senator Mansfield's statement, the Castro government sent the United States a stiff note dealing with a more recent scrape — last week's attack on an American shrimp boat.

Cuba denied that its planes had fired on the boat and charged that two United States Air Force jets machine-gunned Cuban territory early this month, endangering the lives of Russian and Cuban oil workers.

The State Department termed the denial propaganda.

As to the Cuban charge that two United States fighter planes machine-gunned 100 Cubans and several Russian technicians who were working in Las Villas Province on February 9, a State Department spokesman said "no such incident occurred."

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Senator Dirksen said yesterday in an interview that he had uncovered evidence of the deaths of the four flyers in his one-man investigation of the United States-backed invasion which collapsed under the fire of Fidel Castro's forces.

Neither Senator Dirksen nor Senator Mansfield gave any names but the incident was strikingly similar to one disclosed May 4, 1961—about two weeks after the assault.

Four Dead Named

At a news conference in Birmingham, Ala., a Miami Springs (Fla.) lawyer announced that four men recruited by his firm — Double Check Corp. of Miami—to fly for anti-Castro forces apparently had been killed.

The lawyer, Alex E. Carlson, said their cargo plane had crashed in the Caribbean. He identified the four, all from the Birmingham area, as:

Riley W. Shamburger, 36, pilot; Thomas Willard Ray, co-pilot; Leo F. Baker, 35, engineer; and Wade Carroll Gray, 33, radioman.

"These men knew what they were getting into," Mr. Carlson said. "It was a calculated risk if they came back they had a nice nestegg."

Their families, he said, would be paid substantial benefits as part of the contract.

Mr. Carlson identified the

plane as a C-45 and said the four reported one of their engines had gone out and they were losing altitude. A search, he said, turned up wreckage but no bodies.

Another version of the case was reported in a recent issue of the U. S. News & World Report.

In an interview, Gonzalo Herrero, former pilot for Cubana Airlines who was operation officer of the invaders' B-26 squadron, gave this description of how four Americans—whom he did not name—died in the hectic hours of the invasion:

"On the last day of the battle, our pilots were so exhausted that some American instructors volunteered to fly into combat. They didn't have to do that. It wasn't their job. But they volunteered.

"Four went. None came back.

"The Americans rode in two planes—two in each plane. I flew alone.

"I heard one American pilot radio that the anti-aircraft fire was hotter than any he had gone through in Korea. Then there was an explosion—and he was gone.

"Then the other American pilot radioed for help. He said: 'Please send all your fighters in the area.' Soon with one engine afire, his plane fell in the water."

Senator Dirksen said details of his investigation, including names of the four flyers, will be made public perhaps this week.

Row Gets On

Meanwhile, the controversy over the present Cuban situation continued to sputter.

The Castro government's formal denial that its MIGs fired on the United States shrimp boat last week was delivered to the State Department late yesterday by Czech Ambassador Miloslav Ruzek. It said the planes were searching for two small boats stolen from a fishing co-operative when they spotted the shrimp boat.

The MIGs, said the Cuban note, approached the shrimp boat but flew away without firing a shot.

The United States rejected the explanation as propaganda.

United States Marine pilots, sweeping out to check on planes which had been located on radar, said they saw the Cuban MIGs fire rockets which came within 40 yards of the shrimp boat, the Ala. The MIGs apparently turned tail when they spotted the U.S. planes.

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